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4 milligrams of phenomenology: An Anthro-phenomenological Exploration of Smoking Cigarettes

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?Abstract

The commonplace activities of eating and sexual interaction (of some types) have captured and held the attention of anthropologists and phenomenologists.? Each of these activities has been routinely considered in terms of pleasure and danger. ^[1]? Each is (or, in the case of sex, may be) penetrative, and involves the circulation of matter inside the body after matter has ?breached? are identified as the boundaries of the body in a western ontological framework.? Penetration may be considered to be the basis upon which pleasure and danger rest in many anthropological and phenomenological explorations of these aspects of human social life.? Another penetrative activity, smoking, might also be considered to be both pleasurable and dangerous. ^[2]? This paper explores the ways in which frameworks of pleasure and danger are contained in pro and antismoking discourse, and how these discourse relate to, and depart from, the smoking experiences of a number of cigarette smokers.?

Introduction

In this paper, I draw attention to antismoking and prosmoking advertisements, the kinds of constructions of the body they each draw on and construct, and the kinds of responses that a group of smokers in Adelaide, Australia, made to them.? Some of the resultant material may be useful in what has been referred to on the Federal Health Minister?s official website as the Australian Government?

^[3] s ?War On Smoking?.? Let me begin by setting once of the scenes in which this research occurs, that of the gruesome television advertisements that feature smoke impacted eyes and lungs, usually on clean stainless steel lab tables. The advertisements were launched in Australia between May and June 2000, and were marketed on the website of the Federal Health Minister, Dr Michael Wooldridge, as the ?Gruesome new ads? that would launch the Government's ?war on smoking?.

The website had this to say:

Dr Wooldridge celebrated World No Tobacco Day by unveiling two new disturbing advertisements, the first entitled 'Tar' that graphically depicts the effect of cigarette smoke on the lungs, while the second advertisement powerfully explores the damage smoking causes to the eye [the advertisements are known affectionately, at least by Dr. Wooldridge, as

respectively,? ?Tar? and Eye?, and are referred to as such in his media discussions of them].

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Based on ethnographic research carried out in Adelaide among some 60 smokers, I?m not convinced that the ?gruesome and graphic? variety of advertisements is our most effective weapon in the declared war on smoking.? I am, as are those people among whom I conducted research, much more

convinced by the kinds of advertisements that privilege social relationships, and the entailment of smoking in the demise of them, for it is precisely the intercorporeal and social in which smoking is entailed in the everyday practices of many smokers.^[5] An anecdotal example of the charge of ineffectiveness is that when I met with some of the informants participating in my study, they had a particular reaction to one advertisement that was shown on the television that remained on in the background as we chatted together about smoking. The advertisement was one of those graphic ones, in which the aorta of a dead smoker, 'age 30', was squeezed onto a hospital tray to produce the sticky build up within resultant of smoking.^[6] Seven pairs of eyes swiveled around to the screen. Stella, a long time smoker in her 40s, said: 'God, that's gross, isn't it?' Alex, in his 30s, said, 'Yeah. Let's go have a fag'.

This is gold to an ethnographer interested in the effectiveness of antismoking advertisements on smokers, so I questioned them closely about this reaction. 'Look', said Stella, 'Everyone knows smoking can kill you and make you sick.' The ads have the reverse effect on me; it reminds me that it's probably time for one. The ads are all doom and gloom and death, but they just don't realize that it feels good to have a fag, especially with your mates.'^[7]

Given the attention that smoking has long received from those involved in public health policy development and practice, and that it is currently receiving from the Federal Government, combined with incoming legislation that extends existing bans in indoor areas and some external areas, it is no surprise that quantitative data about smoking related deaths, illnesses and hospital costs

abounds.^[8] It is surprising, though, that precious little is known about the everyday practice of smoking, *as it is conducted by everyday smokers*.^[9] Indeed, the antismoking advertisements produced by the antismoking lobby in Australia generated their own sets of *quantitative* data, even before they were aired, which was used to indicate the likelihood of their success based on the fear that carving up eyes and lungs ought to have produced in smokers.^[10] Prior to the release of the advertisements, Hill et al argued that:

'Extensive *quantitative* testing of the "Aorta" advertisement in particular showed that the pictures produced a strong visceral "yuk!" response, hence qualifying it as a "fear appeal".

Admittedly less extensive 'testing' of responses to these advertisements, as expressed above, might indicate otherwise. It certainly was the case that the visceral 'yuk!' was present in both data sets, but in the small slice of ethnographic data issuing forth from Stella and her companions, the visceral

yuk? still led to a cigarette.? This may well point to some of the different kinds of data that qualitative and quantitative approaches might each provide.? Anthropologists are well placed indeed to flesh out existing qualitative data with ethnographically sourced insights into what we know from the quantitative data is Australia?s biggest killer. ^[9] ?? This paper is in one way an attempt to highlight the value of what anthropologists can bring to our understanding of smoking.?

The notion of habitual extension

?Jack Katz has noted that smoking routinely makes visible the respiratory process that evidences our intertwinement with the world.? Katz suggests that marking the more usually invisible exhalation phase of respiration with smoke accounts for some of the appeal of smoking.? In Katz?s formulation, smoke visibly moves beyond what people living under the conditions of a broadly western ontology, in which the body is theorized as? ?being separate from? the world and its contents, might understand as the sitedness of their own bodies.?? This visible move outbound through breath, Katz argues, effectively extends one?s own personal reach in the world. ^[10] ? As I will argue in what follows, this notion of extension is often labeled ?escape? in cigarette advertising.??

Recognition of the intertwinement of body and world is implied in cigarette advertising discourse when it acknowledges that smoke mobilizes the person beyond the gravitational limits assigned the body by Galileo, and, indeed, in western ontology of the body more generally. ^[11] ?? In prosmoking advertising material, smoke achieves an order of corporeal ?escape? by visibly marking the outboundedness of breath, to sites unknown, perhaps even to the legendary ?Flavour Country?, or to the tropical islands of the Menthol group. ^[12] ??? However, the conditions surrounding this mobilization in cigarette advertising discourse are such that the body remains an inert entity submitting to the effects of gravitation and movement, while the smoky products expelled by the body can offer an avenue of escape to sites located beyond its bounds.?

If the prosmoking discourse proposes a dual propensity of the body to at once stand still and move out beyond itself, then the antismoking discourse proposes a strictly bounded and sited body characterized by a Kantian mode of ?receptivity?, in which the perceiving subject remains passively receptive of the world?s range of stimuli. ^[13] ?? Smoke, in this discourse, impacts upon people, and a strict division between person and external world is maintained in the discourse. Katz?s remarks

about the exhalation phase of smoking stand in stark contrast to the almost exclusive focus on the *inhalation* component of the process that is lent to smoking practice by what I will loosely term ? the antismoking lobby? in Australia.? The lobby to which I refer is constructed of a number of bodies that are administered by State and Federal Government Departments.? As well as offering sponsored programs such as the Quitline, which offers information and advice by telephone and print media to people attempting to quit smoking, ?the lobby? runs television advertisements, and presents Government Health Warnings on cigarette packages. Television advertisements and cigarette warning labels are given particular attention in this paper. The anti-smoking lobby in Australia, while providing a (determinist) explanation of the roots of smoking pleasure,^[14] focuses the greatest part of its attention on the inhalation phase of smoking, in order to draw a kind of highly reflected upon ?self-attention? to the danger of the practice.^[15]? This presented danger is related to the capacity of smoke to invade the body, via inbound breath.

Neither pro nor antismoking discourse captures the embodied practice of smoking, at least according to the participants in this research. Instead, each discourse manages to reify temporal aspects of human embodiment: pain and inhalation, in the case of the antismoking lobby discourse, and pleasure and exhalation, in the case of prosmoking discourse.? This is not a critique of either kind of advertising campaign, in terms of a comparison of art to ?real life? that the advertisements fail to reconcile; rather, I examine the discourse that revolves around exhalation and pleasure, in the case of prosmoking advertisements, and inhalation and pain and danger, in the case of the antismoking lobby, and compare these with the ways in which a small group of smokers understood their own entailments in the world as they engaged in smoking practice, to the end of exploring the effectiveness of ?Tar? and ?Eye? antismoking advertising.

To explore these experiences of smoking I use a framework of intercorporeality that is able to slip across the sharp distinctions made in pro and antismoking discourse of outbound breathing, of internal and external regions, of pleasure and danger. Attention to intercorporeality and multisensuality are critical in understanding the complex modes of human sociality entailed in smoking, and the variety of sensual ways of encountering and experiencing smoke and smoking. For the participants involved in this research, smoking constituted a social practice requiring intercorporeal and multisensual means to function.

‘Every cigarette is doing you damage’^[16]: an invitation to the present body

State-sponsored anti-smoking television campaigns draw specific attention to aspects of the smoking body, aspects that are inaccessible to the smoker in the course of unreflected upon smoking. These advertisements issue a kind of invitation to what Langer has called the present body.^[17] Present bodies invite reflection and allow a person to discover their own activity in shaping the world as it is discovered through our perception.^[18] Specific present attention is drawn to the smoking body in anti-smoking television advertising, in which aspects of that body are brought into self-reflection via avenues of pain and danger. James Hagan, whose voice is eerily well known in Australia, New Zealand and the UK, provides the catch-cry in the ads, the single line: ‘Every cigarette is doing you damage’. This line provides instant orientation to the themes of pain and danger, an orientation that is followed by an on-camera exploration of the insides of the body, where the evidence of pain and danger is to be found. In inviting reflexive attention to the body, the antismoking advertisements reify and decontextualise a number of ‘moments’ or ‘aspects’ of human embodiment, which I discuss in turn. The notion that antismoking advertising privileges a number of ‘moments’ is acknowledged by its Australian supporters, some of whom have noted that: ‘

Great care was taken in crafting these “smoker moments” to maximise their ability to engage the smoker and convey empathy for the smoker’s situation. Pre-testing of this component showed that smokers are mildly self-deprecating in relation to their smoking and respond empathically to depictions of awkward “desperate” smoking situations, such as a smoker reduced to lighting a cigarette from the flame of a gas stove (see top left panel on the cover). The advertisements will work to the extent that the thought, act, or sight of inhaling a cigarette brings to mind the sticky walls of arteries, genetic damage to lung tissue, or the “rotting” that characterises chronic lung disease.^[19]

The television advertisements, of which there are several different versions, besides ‘Tar’ and ‘Eye’ run for around 30 seconds and are aired during primetime on commercial television stations. Common to them is a focus on the inhalation phase of smoking, which is treated as a distinctive phase, and is separated out from exhalation. In the ads, the smoker draws smoke from the cigarette into the mouth and then into their lungs (a process which, as viewers, we may follow on the screen down into the smoker’s lungs, a process which the smoker and the viewers of the smoker are usually entirely unable to view). Aspects of the internal body, the lungs, for example, are shown

to be subject to damage in the advertisements; the lungs are shown filled up with smoke, and a voice-over describes the damage to which they are subject. The advertisements typically begin with the lighting up of the cigarette, and the drawing in of a single drag from it, and typically end at the point of exhalation of that single drag.?

Inhalation is here presented as a complete component of what, in habitual experience, is a cyclic and necessarily ongoing respiratory entailment in the world.?? First, self-conscious attention is drawn to that which we must routinely ignore if breathing is to continue in a habitual, disattended manner.? The anti-smoking advertisements offer up for our examination a specific segment (inhalation) of a habitual action (breathing in and out) that is necessarily cyclic.? It is only when we pay specific reflexive attention to the cycle of breath that we can experience breathing as a series of distinctive inhalation and exhalation phases.? ^[20]?? Respiration is more habitually (and necessarily) experienced as an ongoing intertwinement with the world, and, as Katz notes, ?we do not usually seek to find points in it that undermine its ongoing circularity?. ^[21]??? Finding points in its ongoing circularity and dwelling upon them reifies a moment of human being in the world, and is key in the antismoking discourse. This discourse seeks to draw attention to the body as a bounded physicality that is corporeally cut off from a variety of entailments in the world, including those of breathing.? This disentailment has been even more specifically drawn out by the lobby in an advertisement in which the smoking person is presented inside a jail constructed entirely of bars of smoke.? Smoke here does a very unsmoke-like thing: it *stays* in a sited place, as does inhaled smoke for the duration of the antismoking advertisement. Smoke and breath are loath to be located; they *move* and, as they do, they entail and occasion a variety of corporeal intertwinements in the world.

Corporeal containment is also presented in antismoking advertisements through the raising of awareness of the insides of the body.? The anti-smoking lobby is well aware of the fact that many smokers do not pay present attention to their lungs, and cannot in the course of everyday life be aware of the condition of these organs.? The Government Health Authority Warning on my package of Peter Stuyvestant Lights informs me that I may not be aware of the ways in which my lungs are being damaged as I smoke: ?Lung cancer can grow and spread before it is noticed?. ^[22]? ?To the end of awareness, lungs are filmed inside the body, and warnings about the compartmentalised insides of ?my body? are posted in large text on the front of my cigarette package.? These separable aspects of the body are shown to be wholly contained within the site of ?my own body?, increasing

present attention to them as wholly contained within me and separate from any external world with which I might more habitually engage.? As David Abram has noted, the sum total of the ?separable? and diagramable systems of the body is very different from the experiencing body, or ?body subject? that Merleau-Ponty described in *Phenomenology of Perception* as the living and attentive body. ^[23] ?? Abram notes in particular that:

This breathing body ? is very different from that complex machine whose broken parts or stuck systems are diagnosed by our medical doctors and ?repaired? by our medical technologies.? Underneath the anatomized and mechanical body that we have learned to conceive ? dwells the body as it actually experiences things, this poised and animate power that initiates all our projects and suffers all our passions. ^[24]

The distinctive differences between the body presented in the antismoking advertisements or, rather, the collection of reification of bodily moments and systems that are presented, and the experiencing sensual body that Abram describes is perhaps evidenced by the response of the previously mentioned group of smokers who, upon viewing an antismoking advertisement on the television, decided it was time for a cigarette. This response, which indicated that this group of people did not respond to the advertisements by directing fearful attention to their damaged respiratory systems, may also indicate that the compartmentalised respiratory systems they viewed on the screen bore no resemblance to their own experiences of smoking, or indeed of themselves.?

The bodily suffering of passions that Abram draws attention to is critical in achieving the separation of person and world presented in antismoking campaigns.?? Many theoreticians, including Serres, ^[25] Compton, ^[26] ?? Langer, ^[27] and Levy, ^[28] ? have argued that pain or suffering occasions the self-reflexive attention that is required to enact a separation between person and world, however fleeting and incomplete that ?separation? is bound to be in a person who can never fully achieve such a condition in life. ^[29] ? Serres argues that drawing attention to an intersection between person and an aspect of the world results in experiences of pain or suffering. The constriction of the body, the holding in of one?s breath, Serres would argue, constitutes a restriction of the most basic of what he calls human ?joys?: that of habitual and necessary entailment.? Pain is a critical part of the invitation that the anti-smoking lobby issues to move away from habitual intertwinement, to attend to a present condition of the body.? The parts of the body that are shown on anti-smoking

advertisements are shown through a lens of pain and damage.? The anti-smoking lobby draws specific attention not to immediately experienced pain to usher in reflexive attention, but instead to the inevitability of pain as a result of smoking practice.? For this, we go inside the body, which is busily building up the resources that will result in the inevitable physical pain of smoking-related illnesses.?

Selling smoking pleasure

Jack Katz recognizes that, for decades, photographers used the idea that smoke marks the projection of self through the world, ?to suggest the reach of writer?s personalities?. ^[30]? Says Katz: ?there is not any natural marking of the end of one's projection of self into the world through exhaling (a fact, I suspect, that accounts for much of the attraction of smoking)?. ^[31]?? Katz here argues for a view of smoking based on a notion of travel outbound from the body site.? Put simply, my smoke, endowed with the capacity for visually traceable travel via my breath, can travel outbound, moving beyond the bounds of where, should I subscribe to that ontology in which body and world are separated, I would have to stay.?

A great many advertisements for cigarettes have picked up and extended the metaphor of escape that I am suggesting is based on a western body-world ontology.? I can, in some cigarette-speak, *escape* to Flavour Country.? There is travel implied here: on my packet of Peter Stuyvesant Lights, underneath the Government Health Authority warning, is the following message:

Mild choice tobacco plus the Modern Filter make Peter Stuyvesant the International Passport to Smoking Pleasure! ^[32]

Leaving aside the Modern Filter, which requires an analysis beyond the scope of this paper, I want to draw out a connection between ?smoking pleasure? and ?passport?..?

In traditional philosophy, the bearer of the look is assumed not to move and ?sits down to look, through a window at the blossoming tree: a statue posed on affirmations and theses?. ^[33]?? Contemporary philosopher Michel Serres argues against such an assumption, and insists instead that receptivity, in the Kantian sense does not characterize?? ?viewing, which is not as much about passively looking and seeing (or otherwise receiving) visible objects as it is about ?visiting? with them.? The term ?visit? and the verb ?to visit? mean at first ?seeing?; ?they add to it the idea of itinerary ? the one who visits *goes* to see?. ^[34]???? Such a notion of vision might be likened to the

activity of the senses proposed by Abrams in *The Spell of the Sensuous* ^[35], and understands vision in particular, as Connor notes, to be 'on the move'. ^[36]??? This suggests that the sensing body goes to visit or temporarily dwell in what is seen.? The fact that what is seen in this case, smoke, is also on the move ? up, up and away to who knows where ? makes a certain sensual sense of passports, itineraries, escape to tropical islands and the easy journey to Flavour Country.? Smoky breath goes places beyond us, and cigarette companies are shrewd to imagine for us several appealing destinations.? Serres's point, however, is critically different from the one made in prosmoking discourse: in Serres's work, there can never be a situation where the body somehow stays sited, while some of its aspects reach out beyond some specific site in which the body is located.? To see is to travel in Serres's work because the sensing body is, through sight, unsited; it persists in the act of seeing that which we have entailed in our sensing bodies.? As Merleau-Ponty, ^[37] ^[38] ^[39] ^[40] Basso, Abram, and Casey, have all insisted, the body persists in ongoing conmingling reciprocity with things through sensual perception, to yield a coalition of body and things.? In prosmoking discourse, such a conmingling is only partially acknowledged, and to see is to travel in a kind of armchair manner.? The visibility of smoke reveals to us the kind of outbound travel that our smoky breaths might undertake that our (only ontologically) sited bodies cannot; we can have the destinations of our international travel, requiring a passport, imagined for us by Peter Stuyvesant, or we can simply take a quick in-between-work break out in local Flavour Country. Or, rather, in prosmoking discourse, our breath can; our bodies, in this discourse, stay put.

Taste is also important for accounting for smoking pleasure in prosmoking advertisements, in at least two ways. Serres' work is again useful here.? As I have noted elsewhere, ^[41] in other work dealing with the fundamental differences between the life of the body as it might be expressed in language, and the life of the body as it lives in and through sensual means, Serres' work is useful for getting to the sensual heart of the life of the body, particularly in respect of his insights into the resistance of the living body to the reducing project of language:??

?Serres refers to the Last Supper (among other banquets) in the 'Tables' section of *Les Cinq Sens*, which deals with taste and smell. ^[42]?? Two bodies, or, rather, two sides of one body, emerge from the banquet. On the one hand is the body of the Assumption, 'the body raised up in language', which, as the result of linguistic petrification, is reduced to the condition of statue, and is no longer able to taste and smell. ^[43]? On the other hand, and set against this linguistic body, is the body consumed at the Last Supper.? This body circulates in the forms of bread and wine, and is never fixed or held still, but is, as Connor notes 'a mobile

transubstantiation?^[44] ??^[45].

Here, taste is understood to be a sense that dissolves the object of taste: that which is to be tasted must interact with the body and be dissolved by it in order to be tasted at all.[?] This is a process that corrupts the objective status of that which is to be tasted: the tasty thing must become part of the body.[?] However much or however often we visit with those things we see, and however much our sensual projects of vision might be characterized by the activity of visiting rather than the Kantian passivity of receptive seeing, that which is to be seen may be viewed *and still maintain its objective status*: we need not have the object of vision dissolved in order to see it. Here then is a crucial difference between the sensual project and activity of seeing and those of smelling and tasting: as Borthwick puts it, 'a metaphysics premised in sight's subject-object split cannot include the object's dissolvability'^[46], whereas in the cases of smell and taste, object dissolvability is entirely necessary to our olfactory and our tasting projects. In the case of smoking, vision and taste, combine in a sensual knot that enables us to entertain the notion of visiting.[?] In the first instance, inbound breath takes the smoke down into lungs, and it may be viewed as it emerges outbound for Flavour Country.[?] But it is not just personal breath that gives wind to smoke enabling it to travel at all; our bodies have worked upon the smoke, *tasted* it in the mouth, and absorbed its flavour.[?] The smoke that goes in is not the same as the smoke that comes out; tasting smoke makes the smoke part of us, and makes us part of smoke.[?] That is the first way in which taste is important, and this order of taste is, as Borthwick puts it, 'taste with a small t'.^[47]

Taste with a capital 'T' is also important here.[?] The use of terms such as 'Flavour Country' as part of prosmoking advertising are included also as aesthetic of taste, an aesthetic that allows us to partake in taste from a distance (or, as Borthwick puts it, to otherwise judge pleasure through a visual metaphoric).^[48] There are certainly elements of capital 'T' taste involved in the purchasing of Dunhill or Benson and Hedges cigarettes at the high end of the cigarette market, as opposed to Holiday (a name which again references travel), one of the cheapest brands available in Australia.^[49]

I have argued here that 'Flavour' works in association with 'Country' because it allows the immediacy of experience (small 't' taste) to become intertwined and connected with an outbound breath, that is part of me because I have held it inside my body and worked upon it with my taste

sense, essentially dissolving it into myself.?? To see is to visit, and to taste is to have become part of.? Now, part of the smoke I see, I make personal journeys outbound to Flavour Country.? Even now that I am personally implicated through taste in the smoke I expel out to Flavour Country, however, my body remains in its familiar ontological place as I watch the smoke I have worked upon travel to its destination, whether I go first class, via Benson and Hedges, or travel economy with Holiday.

Here then, are two renderings of smoking practice conducted via discourse: the antismoking rendering, based on the notion of the invasion and entrapment of the body behind smoky bars, ushered in through an invitation to the corporeally constrained body, and the prosmoking rendering, based on a corporeal logic of escape and reach, ideas ushered in through the capacity of smoke to extend the still-sited person out through the air out there.? Vision is key in both of these renderings.? Through the lens of invasion, we visually track the smoke as it invades the site of the body, following it down via the television camera to the more usually unseen regions of the self.? In the lens of extension, Katz argues that smoke will visually reveal the reach of the person.? Taste is key here also, making that reach more personally our own.?

Vision and taste, even taken together, are not nearly sufficient to account for multisensual and intercorporeal smoking practice. Focusing on these sensual aspects ignores the other sensual means by which we experience smoke.? Similarly, focusing on the ontologically organized domains of inhalation/invasion exhalation/extension ignores the fact that we ourselves consistently ignore these kinds of boundaries in the course of habitual smoking, and in the course of other modes of being human.

In his notes on the connection between smoke and writers, Katz states that:

the subtle and nuanced character of the smoke that curls out from a cigarette, and its capacity to overcome resistance and become diffused as a feature of any environment, would do proud any writer who could permeate his or her writings with such qualities.?

[50]

In Katz's view, diffusion and permeation can be considered features of smoke as it disappears from our fields of vision.? But what if he smelled the smoke?? Or heard it as it was roughly exhaled?? My argument here is two-fold: first, logics of invasion and extension are not mutually exclusive logics, and second, vision and taste are only two of five sensual modes, which do not necessarily remain five distinctive modes, in which smoking practice might be more fruitfully

explored.? I use frames of intercorporeality and dissolvability to explore smoking as a social practice that uses intercorporeal means to function, as do all methods of human sociality and communication.

Intercorporeality/Dissolvability

Smoke and the practice of smoking offer a sensual experience in which the quality of dissolvability is paramount. There are many aspects of this dissolvability, in terms of the character of the smoke itself, which renders the practice of smoking olfactorially, audibly, visibly, haptically and taste sense-able. Cigarettes themselves are dissolvable; one may view the reduction of a cigarette object to ashes.? Cigarette smoke dissolves into the air into which it is expelled.? We know from the anti-smoking lobby that chemicals in cigarettes, after a fashion, dissolve into the body of the smoker.?? We also know that smoking itself is capable of beginning a kind of dissolving process from within the body on the sense organs: smoking corrupts the seeing of the eye, the smelling of the nose, the tasting of the mouth and tongue.? It can also restrict blood flow, especially to the hands, feet and genitals, which assigns it the capacity to render less sensitive our haptic systems.

Smoke also dissolves other kinds of social and conversational boundaries.? Asking ?have you a lighter?? of a group of persons unknown to you in the pub might lead any place.? Becoming part of ?the smokers? at ?smoko? ^[51]? brings a person into alignment, into space, into shared activity, with people who may well have otherwise remained unknown to them.? The phenomenon of ?the social smoker? alters us to the fact that smoking, for some people, requires the presence of others in order to be undertaken at all.?

Smoking might also extend or continue intercorporeal relationships between people, not only due to its capacity to weave through the air and permeate the bodies of others, thusly connecting them to you, but owing also to the capacity of smoke to act as a metaphor of corporeal intertwinement.? This metaphor is based on a sensual-corporeal logic of our experiences of smoke to connect.? The post-coital cigarette, for example, if both parties were to smoke, might, in the curling, intermingling and warm smoke, continue the warm, curling intermingling so recently passed, even as each party departs to opposite sides of the bed.?

Cigarette smoke can also point to the possibilities of links between personal bodies.? Individually exhaled plumes of smoke may meet and touch and mingle in the air: something that was

expressly forbidden between male and female smokers in the small town in Indonesia where I used to live, lest the meeting and intertwining of air that had been inside a gendered body should encourage more interactions involving embraces. The separation of gendered smoky exhalations points to the capacity of smoke to reflect the intercorporeal connections between persons, but smoking also works to dissolve existing social connections between people, entailing them in undesirable intercorporeal relations with others.[?] At this point I introduce a specifically (multi) sensual lens to explore intercorporeal and social connections between people via smoke, in order to point to the multisensual experiences that smoking practice entails and occasions.

If I was to focus on the smell of smoke alone, I may well be able to describe the panic of people who could smell the sly approach of smoke into their own unwilling lungs, as well as the longing of those desiring the invasion of the lung with smoky fulfillment. As Borthwick notes, despite the presence of the well recognized, clearly defined 'individual', when it comes to olfaction there is caused to be and there remains:[?]

Part of the other within the subject?olfaction opens the possibility, through the actual embodiment of the other, of another kind of sociality that acknowledges the interconnection with, not the complete separation of, the subject and the other. Further, it begins to shake the ground that holds the subject-other relationship, that is, it shakes the sight-based separation of self and other?if sociality was theorized through smell, how different it could be! Where would the self end and other begin?^[52]

Melissa, a young woman, and I were talking about smoking.[?] She remembered waiting for a bus in the city when a young man approached her and asked her for a cigarette.[?] She gave him one, and inquired of him how he had known that she was a smoker.[?] The young man replied that while he was standing next to her at the bus stop, he had been able to smell the cigarette smoke on her clothes.[?] Louise, an older woman, recalled an experience many years ago when she had gone to a Blue Light disco.^[53]?? There, she had smoked 'almost an entire packet of Alpine Lights' with her friends.^[54]??? Desperate to hide the smell from her father, who was to pick her up from the disco, she went outside and rubbed her hands with the leaves of a fragrant tree that was growing outside the venue. She also borrowed toothpaste from a friend, who had brought along her toothpaste in case she got a love-bite; toothpaste, Louise explained, was known to young women to have the capacity to reduce the appearance of the telltale bruise, if it was applied right away.[?] Louise rubbed toothpaste inside her mouth and over her teeth to hide the smell.[?] She planned to explain away the smell on her

clothes as the result of other people's smoke.? Her father, who picked her up, and who had, according to Louise, ?a nose like a German Shepherd?, kissed her cheek and suspected that Louise had been smoking.? He sniffed her fingers to confirm this, and concluded correctly that 14-year-old Louise had indeed been smoking.?

Trevor, a gardener, told me that at work, there was not a special time for smoko, and that it was taken when Trevor, the head gardener, felt that it was appropriate.? Trevor works in a garden divided by many retaining walls, and other compartmentalizing devices, which meant that workmates were often not in one another's view.?? Trevor said that, ?when the other fellows smell my smoke, they come over to where I am and that's how smoko happens??.? ^[55]

If sociality were to be theorized through smell, the experiences of Melissa, Louise and Trevor might indeed indicate to us the difficulty of deciding where people begin and end.? If the sociality and intercorporeality entailed by smoking were to be theorized through smell, we might draw different kinds of attention to smoke's capacity to dissolve existing social and corporeal connections between persons.

In Trevor's case, smoke dissolved distances between people as the smell of Trevor's smoke wafted to the noses of his workmates, eventually organizing them together in one place, and around one activity.? In Melissa's case, the smell of cigarettes lingered sufficiently long in her clothes to dissolve a social boundary that otherwise would have remained between her and the young man at the bus stop, who eventually became her boyfriend. Armed with this olfactory knowledge, the man effectively dissolved a knowledge and a social boundary, which led him to dissolve other kinds of boundaries between himself and Melissa later on.?? Louise experienced a dissolving of the connection that kept her father and herself on good terms; in her father's view, the specific connection that had been dissolved was one of ?trust??.? Louise's father then took it upon himself to dissolve some more of Louise's social connections when he grounded her.?

Touch is also critical here.? I have alluded to the ways in which touch is involved in smoking in terms of the capacity of smoke to link personal bodies in Indonesia, and in the case of the post-coital cigarette, which reflects and extends intercorporeal relationships made through touch.? Touch to the cigarette object itself is also involved in the sensual knot of smoking practice. Megan pointed to the dissolving boundary between cigarette object and her own hands when she spoke of her attempts to ?look sexy and elegant? as she smoked.? Megan said, ?I always smoke long cigarettes,

Super Kings, and lately, I have been considering using a cigarette holder? ^[56] When I asked her why, she looked disapprovingly at her hands. ?My hands are really pudgy, and my fingers are short and squat?, she complained. ?When I hold a cigarette, like this?, she said, holding up her ? smoking fingers?, my whole arm looks longer, and I feel more elegant. It?s like wearing false eyelashes, for that illusion of length??. ?What do you do with your other hand?? I asked. ? Champagne flute?, she replied instantly. ?Long-stemmed?. ^[57] The holding of cigarette object in the short fingers of the pudgy hand effectively extended these shortcomings into the longer reach of Megan, as the cigarette became part of fingers, the fingers part of cigarette. ? Megan had her longer hand.?

Megan also talked about what she did with the smoke she expelled if she happened to be flirting with someone while she smoked with lengthy elegance. ?If I?m interested?, she said, ?I like to blow my smoke up around the side of his face, like a caress??. She stroked the side of my face in an upward motion, to show me what she meant. ? She indicated with her fingers that the smoke trailed up beyond the face and whispered away. ? I asked her if it worked. ?They get the message?, she replied. ?How about if you want them to leave you alone?? I asked, intrigued. ?Then I blow it straight in their face, into their eyes?, she said, grinning maliciously. It?s like giving someone a smelly slap in the face, without getting charged with assault?. ?Does anyone do it to you??. I asked. ?Yep. You can tell, if a man lets the smoke just slide out of his mouth, as opposed to blowing it out while he?s perving on you or flirting with you, you can be pretty sure he wants to slide something else into you as well??. ^[58]

Megan?s descriptions here are rather synaesthetic. ? Megan can ?slap? and ?caress? a face, the latter will perhaps lead to more caresses. ? These are practices of touch; Megan?s language indicates that her smoky work at the bar is a kind of touching. ? Here, touch is synaesthetically crossed with vision, and with smell, as well as with taste and hearing. The smoky slaps and caresses Megan gives to unsuspecting men are felt as a touch of breath to face as much as they are visually tracked as they arrive, as much as they are smelled and tasted as they hit the organs of taste and smell, as much as they are heard; delivering a smoky slap involves a quick exhalation of breath, and delivering a caress involves long, drawn out whisper. Megan delivers multisensual perceivable slaps and caresses. These are not simply precursors to touch; they are visual, olfactory, audible and touch sense-able, all at once. ? Divisions between singular sensual ways and means of interacting with the world are also

dissolved in Megan's practice of smoking.

The examples I have included in this section on intercorporeality and dissolvability show that inhalation may make for pleasure more than pain. Extensions of smoke into the air may indeed lead to pain, and not to Flavour Country, as is the case with Megan's slap. The examples also indicate that smoking, rather than being adequately reflected in discourses that tend to separate the body from the world, entails intercorporeal means to function, as do any and all other aspects of human sociality and communication. This lack of entailment, in antismoking advertising contexts, might just account for the reaction of the group of smokers that wanted to smoke, even though they were watching a lung being carved up on the television screen, one that was there precisely as a result of smoking practice. When I asked my informants which antismoking advertisements *were* effective, they pointed to those that acknowledged interconnection and sociality.² It is unsurprising that smokers engaged in smoking as a social and intercorporeal practice should respond to those advertisements which privilege precisely those capacities of smoke and smoking that they experience, and that point to smoke's equal capacity to reduce and constrain the opportunity for social interaction.³ Stella, the mother of an 11 year old, said:

Y'know the ones that make me really feel like quitting are the ones that show what happens to families when a person gets sick or dies from fagging. Like that one that shows the dad in hospital, and he can't go and play with his daughter, 'cause he's dying.⁴ What a thing to do to your kid, y'know, to be stuck in there while their life is happening.

The advertisement she refers to is one that also shows that smoking people are cut off from a variety of social-communicative intercorporeal entailments in the world.⁵ One of these advertisements shows a male patient in an oncology ward, who is struggling to breathe, even with the assistance of the respirator machine, which renders him unable to speak.⁶ Obviously in a great deal of physical pain, his eyes fill well up with tears as he listens to his young daughter describe the game of cricket she has just played with her friends. The ad ends with her lament, 'you should've been there, Dad'. Again, in this advertisement, the themes of inhalation, pain and corporeal containment are primary.⁷ 'Dad' labours over inhalation, a direct result of the inhalation of cigarette smoke in the first instance.⁸ He is, by means of the respirator machine, corporeally cut off from his daughter, who cannot reach him over its bulk, and he is cut off from establishing conversation with

her.? Dad? is also corporeally constricted because he is bed ridden, unable to establish intercorporeal relationships in conversation, through touch, or outside at the cricket match.? His inhalation of smoke has incarcerated him in an invisible smoky prison, given form in the world of the hospital, and has cut him off from a variety of intercorporeal engagements that constitute his usual modes of movement, sociality and communication. Pain is still present as a frame in this order of advertising, but it includes the emotional pain of guilt that occurs when one habitually intertwined body, Dad?s body for example, disentiines from the body of the family through illness and death.?? In other words, the intercorporeality that smoking both entails and occasions and destroys is here privileged. Because smoke is so much a part of intercorporeal sociality ? its creation, maintenance and destruction ? we would be perhaps wise to take note of it in our approach to creating effective antismoking tools.

Perhaps the following example bears this out best of all. On Thursday 13 May 2004 the NSW Health and the Cancer Institute NSW announced that they had joined forces to launch a campaign targeting women smokers. Dubbed ?Lady Killer ? Why risk It??.? the campaign was designed to raise women?s? awareness of the additional health risks (reduced fertility, menstrual problems, difficulties with pregnancy and childbirth) they face compared with men if they take up and/or continue to smoke. The campaign was understood by its creators and supporters to be a timely one, since female smoking rates are declining at a rate more slowly than male smoking rates. In Australia, 18 per cent of Australian women over 14 years are daily smokers,^[59] prompting the CEO of the Cancer Institute NSW, Professor Jim Bishop, to state that:

We believe there is great urgency to highlight to women the personal consequences of their smoking. This campaign is designed to ?strike a chord? with women, especially women between the ages of 16 - 34 years as they have the highest rates of daily smoking in NSW.

[60]

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A group of young women involved in my research, aged between 15 and 19, used smoking in a very specific way to deal with difficulties related to pregnancy and childbirth, which very much entailed their urgent attention to the personal consequences of smoking.? Perhaps the strongest intercorporeal, or *intracorporeal* bond of all, pregnancy, was covered in this research when it became apparent to me that young pregnant women drew upon the capacity of cigarette smoke to dissolve their fear of giving birth. These women would smoke with purpose in order to reduce the

birth weight of their babies; this being the most often articulated fear among the young women I interviewed connected with having a baby. These women would go so far as to select those cigarette packages bearing the specific message about the association between smoking and low birth weight babies, as if those bearing the specific message would somehow do the job of reducing the weight of their babies more efficiently. They were not, by the way, the only consumers to purchase cigarettes selectively; many consumers would exchange packets they had been handed by store clerks bearing messages about lung cancer and heart disease for the apparently less threatening 'your smoking can harm others?', and 'smoking while pregnant harms your baby?'. Here we have a strategic practice directly involving smoking in intracorporeality, one that slips effortlessly across the divide between fear and its reduction, between maternal and fetal body, between the intention of antismoking labeling and the activity of imaginative and frightened mothers to be, and between the generalized statistics that show a decrease in smoking prevalence, and its more constant appeal to young women with low educational attainment.

Conclusion

' The practice of smoking functions as a social practice by multisensual, intercorporeal means, and as a relational, social practice; smoking not only olfactorially links persons in smoking dining rooms with people in the non-smoking section, it also makes for conversation between strangers ('have you a lighter?'), and creates a common body of 'the smokers' who spill out of public buildings together at smoko.' Smoke dissolves specific social barriers between persons, reveals ontological barriers between objects and personal bodies to be reifications, maintains and creates connections between distances, between genders, conversations, mothers and their unborn children, social situations, places and between the senses as smoke is multisensually experienced in a number of ways simultaneously, leading to synaesthetic descriptions of slaps.' It is a practice that has the capacity to act as both a facilitating and destructive social force. At least as much as it dissolves boundaries, it changes orders and types of intercorporeal connections and relationships, works upon and dissolves trust, the possibility of sex, and conversation.' Rigid frames of inhalation/invasion/pain in antismoking discourse and exhalation/extension/pleasure in prosmoking discourse based on vision in the former case and vision/taste sets in the latter, and which both maintain a separability of person and world, are insufficient to deal with the plumes of smoky

evidence I have presented here.

[1] In the case of sex, see for example Carole S. Vance, 'More Danger, More Pleasure: A decade after the Barnard sexuality conference?', in Carole S. Vance (ed.) *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, Pandora Press, London, 1989, p xvi-xxxix.?? In the case of food and eating, see for example Carol Munter, 'Fat and the Fantasy of Perfection?' in Carole S. Vance (ed.) *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, Pandora Press, London, 1989, p 225-241.

[2] ? I speak in this paper only of smoking as it relates to cigarettes.? It is evident from my own ongoing research in smoking that other smoking practices and products entail and occasion quite different experiences of smoking. ?

[3] ? Commonwealth of Australia, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, Michael Wooldridge Ministerial Web Posting 31 May 2000 'Gruesome new ads launches in Government's war on smoking'?? 2004.

[4] Ibid

[5] Personal Fieldnotes vol. 1 February 2004, p17.

[6] ibid.

[7] See for example: US Department of Health and Human Services 2001, *Women and Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General*, Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, Washington; Walsh, R., Lowe, J. & Hopkins, P. 2001, 'Quitting smoking in pregnancy?', *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 175, Canberra 2002 pp. 320-23.;? Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2002, *Australia's Health 2002*, AIHW, Canberra 2002.; ?B. Ridolfo? &? C Stevenson, C. *The Quantification of Drug-Caused Mortality and Morbidity in Australia*, , AIHW (Drug Statistics Series no. 7), Canberra, 2001.

[8] David Hill et al? 'The return of scare tactics?' [7 \(1\): 5 -- Tobacco Control](#) 1998; 7:5-8 (Spring).

[9] Commonwealth of Australia, op. cit.?

[10] ? Jack Katz, *How Emotions Work* Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1999, p 340.

[11] ? Edward Casey, 'How to get from space to place in a fairly short stretch of time: phenomenological prolegomena?' in Steven Feld and Keith H Basso (eds) *Senses of Place*, School of American Research Press, Santa Fe, 1996, p 21.?

[12] ? Katz, op. cit., p 379 n. 39.

[13] See Edmund Husserl, *Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, trans. J.S Churchill and K. Amerkis, Northwestern University Press, Illinois, 1973, p 108.

[14] ? In both the pleasure and pain 'accounts'? produced by the anti-smoking lobby, expert knowledge of the smoking body, knowledge that is largely unavailable to smokers themselves, is used as a basis for the lobby to disseminate information about smoking. Access to this body positions the antismoking lobby etically and rationally in relation to emically and irrationally located participants.? In this sense, the antismoking lobby shares a number of positions with determinist theoreticians.?? I would nominate Marvin Harris (1977) as characteristic of the 'determinist theoreticians'? that I am referring to in this paper. Harris, who advocates for a variety of ecological determinism labeled 'cultural materialism?', which seeks to explain any and all sociocultural phenomena to a root condition of the environment, is typical of determinist theoreticians who seek to link ostensibly 'strange' behaviour, or behaviour that seems 'irrational'?

to concrete circumstances, to subjects who are shown to behave in line with the infrastructural conditions made primary by the theorist. These positions are ones of expert knowledge of the body unavailable to, in this instance, smokers, and a predilection for using this expert knowledge to 'rationally' explain activities that might be called 'irrational'. The apparently irrational activity of smoke inhalation is explained as a form of drug dependence that can only be rendered understandable by reference to the drug induced pleasure and subsequent addiction and, therefore, the pain and danger that the activity will inevitably bring later.' The Government Health Warning on my package of Peter Stuyvesant Lights, for example, says: Smoking is addictive. Nicotine, a drug in tobacco, makes smokers feel they need to smoke. The more you smoke, the more your body will depend on getting nicotine and you may find yourself hooked. It may be difficult to give up smoking once you are hooked on nicotine. The Quitline counselors have informed me that the reason I enjoy smoking so much and why I am finding it difficult to quit has to do with the ways in which my body has come to depend on the effects of nicotine, and the drug induced pleasure it might give me. Any other pleasure I may get from smoking is reducible to my dependence on nicotine. Quitline counselors occasionally gave another explanation for smoking pleasure, that smoking was pleasurable because it made people feel relaxed.' This explanation too was explained by reference to the physical effects of cigarettes on the body; in this case, carbon monoxide was responsible for reducing oxygen flow to the brain and consequently 'numbed' responses to situations and events.' Here, smoking pleasure is traceable to the root cause of the effects of the properties of cigarettes on the physical body.' This understanding of smoking pleasure bears striking resemblance to determinist concerns with rendering the otherwise (or, emically) irrational understandable by reference to something rationally concrete.'

[15] 'In taking this practice of the anti-smoking lobby for critical analysis in my essay, I am not suggesting that the anti-smoking lobby ought to be doing something different; indeed, the lobby could not be expected to do anything else but highlight the dangers that smoking poses to the unseen regions of the body.'

[16] 'Catch -cry repeated in every printed and televised example of the current antismoking the advertising campaign.'

[17] 'M. Langer, *Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Perception: A Guide and Commentary*, Florida State University Press, Tallahassee, 1989, p 32.'

[18] 'ibid.'

[19] David Hill et al. *op. cit.*

[20] 'I am reminded here of experiences with medical practitioners, who often seek to divide our breathing cycles into distinctive parts for the purposes of gaining knowledge about the insides of our bodies.'

[21] 'Katz, *op. cit.*, p 340.'

[22] 'Government Health Authority Warning. There are a number of warnings produced by the Government Health Authority, including those that deal with smoking and pregnancy, smoking and lung cancer, passive smoking, and so on. These labels take up a large area of a cigarette package (roughly one third of the front side and roughly one half of the back), and so they draw the attention of purchasers very effectively.' A common response to this among the smokers I interviewed in the course of preparing this paper involved the selective purchasing of cigarette packages that displayed the least frightening Government Health Authority Warning labels.' Purchasers I spoke to said that they often exchanged the cigarette packages they had been given by store clerks for less frightening ones before paying for their cigarettes.' Men, and women who were not pregnant, overwhelmingly favored those packages that indicated that cigarettes could harm unborn babies, and tended to try to avoid those that mentioned lung cancer. This might be regarded as the refusal to reflexively attend the body presented by the anti-smoking lobby; a decline of the invitation issued by them to attend to a present body.'

[23] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1962.

[24] David Abram. *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-than-Human World*, Vintage Books, New York, 1996, p 46.

[25] 'Michel Serres, *Les Cinq Sens*, Hachette, Paris, 1998.'

[26] 'Jeffrey Compton, *Embracing the Body of Culture: Understanding Cross-Cultural Psychology From the Perspective of a Phenomenology of Embodiment*, (<http://home.earthlink.net/~rationalmystic.cultsoma.htm>) 2001, p 4.'

[27] ? Langer, op. cit.

[28] ? Robert Levy, ?The Emotions in Comparative Perspective? In Klaus R. Scherer and Paul Eckman (eds.) *Approaches to Emotion*, Lawrence and Erlbaum and Associates, ? New Jersey, 1984, pp 397-412.

[29] ? Compton, op. cit., p 4.

[30] ? Katz, op. cit., p 379 n. 39.?

[31] ? Katz, op. cit., p 340.?

[32] ? Peter Stuyvesant Lights Package Advertising.

[33] ? Serres, op. cit., p 405.?

[34] ? *ibid.*, ? p 334.

[35] Abram., op. cit.?

[36] Steven Connor, ?Michel Serres? five senses?, Expanded version of a paper given at the Michel Serres Conference held at Birbeck College, May 1999, (<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/eh/eng/skc/5senses.htm>), 1999, p 6.

[37] Merleau-Ponty, op. cit., p? 208.

[38] Keith H Basso, ?Wisdom sits in places? in Steven Feld and Keith H Basso (eds.),? *Senses of Place*, School of American Research Press, Santa Fe, 1996, p 54.

[39] Abram, op. cit., p 53.

[40] Casey, op. cit., p 22.

[41] Simone Dennis, ?Melted honey: sax and sex? *Popular Culture Review Journal*, vol. 15, i.2, 2004, p 58

[42] ? Serres, op. cit.

[43] ? *ibid.*, p 413.

[44] ? *ibid.*, p 413.

[45] Dennis, op. cit.?

[46] ? Fiona Borthwick, ?Olfaction and Taste: Invasive Odours and Disappearing Objects? *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 11 i. 2, 2000, p 133.

[47] *ibid.*

[48] ? *ibid.*

[49] ? Just as relevant is a visual metaphors that does indeed allow us to partake of smoke at a distance without having

worked upon it with taste sense.? Buying Winfield Blues (or ?Winnie Blues?, as they were affectionately known among those of us without much disposable income) in my home town was a different thing from buying Dunhill or Benson and Hedges. ?Flavour Country? might well be a place I cannot afford to go.

[50] ? Katz, op. cit., p 379 n. 39.

[51] ? Another term for a cigarette break, regularly employed in Australian slang.

[52] ? Borthwick, op. cit., p 132.

[53] ? A regular nighttime disco held for people under 18 years of age by Australian Police Departments.

[54] ? Personal Fieldnotes? vol. 2 April 2004,? p 5.

[55] ? ibid., p 31.?

[56] ? ibid., p 37.??

[57] ? ibid., p 40.?

[58] ? ibid., p 50.

[59] Miller, M. & Draper, G., *Statistics on Drug Use in Australia 2000*. AIHW Cat. No. PHE 30, AIHW (Drug and Statistics Series no. 8) 2001; see also? Public Health Division. The Health of the People of New South Wales:? Report of the Chief Health Officer Sydney NSW 2002.

[60] NSW Health and Cancer Research Institute NSW Joint Media Release ??Lady Killer? Why Risk It?? Campaign Launched Today?? May 13 2004.